

SLAVERY

The civil wars involved vast loss of life. The barbarian raids sometimes swept off the population of whole provinces, to die in bitter slavery in the German forests. MARCUS AURELIUS once compelled the Quadi, one German people, to surrender 50,000 such Roman captives.

But Roman slavery itself, within the empire, was the most powerful cause of the decline of population. The wealthy classes of society commonly do not have large families. Our population grows from the large families

of the working classes. But in the Roman world, the place of our free workmen was taken largely by slaves, and slaves rarely left families. If they had children, the master "exposed" the infants, since it was easier and more convenient to buy a new slave (from the captures made by the legions on the frontier) than to rear one.

Besides, the competition of slave labor ground into dust what free labor there was, - so that working people could not rear a large family, and were driven to the cruel practice of exposure of infants - which ancient morality allowed.